

1 THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. JONES
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7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
8 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
9 AT SEATTLE

10 BLACK LIVES MATTER SEATTLE-
11 KING COUNTY, ABIE EKENEZAR,
12 SHARON SAKAMOTO, MURACO
13 KYASHNA-TOCHA, ALEXANDER
14 WOLDEAB, NATHALIE GRAHAM,
15 AND ALEXANDRA CHEN,

16 Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF SEATTLE,

17 Defendant.

No. 2:20-cv-00887-RAJ

18 DECLARATION OF JOEY WIESER IN
19 SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR
20 CONTEMPT

21 I, Joey Wieser, declare and state as follows:

22 1. The information contained in this declaration is true and correct to the best of my
23 knowledge, and I am of majority age and competent to testify about the matters set forth herein.

24 2. I live in Capitol Hill. I work as a YouTube channel manager for a local company.
25 Outside of work, I have spent the last two months documenting police interactions with
26 protesters by livestreaming those interactions as a freelance journalist.

3. Because of my consistent presence documenting the protests, and because I wear
a distinctive jacket, I have become well-known to the group of independent media with whom I
often find myself when I livestream the protests. I have also become well-known to protesters,

WIESER DECL. ISO MOT. FOR
CONTEMPT (No. 2:20-cv-00887-RAJ) -1

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1 and it would not surprise me if many Seattle Police Department (SPD) officers are aware that I
 2 am part of the independent media.

3 4. In my two months of documenting police interactions with protesters, I have
 4 never witnessed police targeting independent media with the crowd control weapons I have seen
 5 them use against protesters.

6 5. But Saturday, July 25, 2020, was different. I was standing on a corner with other
 7 independent media, like I had countless times before. Police targeted us with blast balls, firing
 8 them directly at us, even as I and others shouted “Media, media.”

9 6. The blast balls and other crowd control weapons forced us to move. As I
 10 retreated, I said to the officers, “We’re moving back, we’re being peaceful, we’re moving back,
 11 we’re being peaceful.”

12 7. I posed no threat. I was not hurting anybody, destroying anything, or otherwise
 13 acting in a threatening manner. Despite this, while I was on stair steps, an officer shoved me,
 14 and then shot pepper spray into my mouth. At this point, we were a full block away from where
 15 the police started pushing the protesters.

16 8. I said, as documented in my livestream, “I just got shoved and sprayed in the
 17 mouth, [screaming] I’m being attacked, I’m being attacked.”

18 9. But the attack would not end there. I was pepper sprayed again, directly in the
 19 face. I was blinded and could not see. I yelled, “Help, help . . . Somebody help me, somebody
 20 help me, please help me.” A blast ball was thrown at my feet, and when it exploded, I felt the
 21 heat run up my body. While I was disoriented from the blast and blind from the pepper spray, I
 22 tried to make my way away from the protest, looking to find safety.

23 10. Most of this interaction can be viewed in this clip from my livestream:
 24 <https://www.facebook.com/724170490/posts/10158290622165491/?d=n>.

1 11. I yelled for help repeatedly after being pepper sprayed and experiencing the blast
2 ball's explosion. One or more people guided me half a block away, into an alley, and treated me
3 with saline, milk, and water.

4 12. My face felt like it was on fire. It was the most excruciating pain I have
5 experienced in my adult life. I could not open my eyes for at least 15 minutes. My neck and arms
6 also felt like they were on fire.

7 13. As soon as I was able, I made my way back home. I took a shower to wash away
8 the pepper spray. As the water washed the pepper spray over my scalp and body, I experienced
9 the burning again, until I was able to wash all of it away.

10 14. In the nearly two months that I have been documenting and livestreaming these
11 protests, I have sometimes encountered the effects of pepper spray or blast balls, directed against
12 others. Saturday, July 25, 2020, was different. Other independent media and I were targeted by
13 officers who used painful crowd control weapons against us.

14 15. Despite having experienced the worst pain in my adult life on Saturday, July 25,
15 2020, I am planning to attend protests in the future to continue to document police interactions
16 with protesters.

17
18 Executed this 27th day of July 2020 at Seattle, Washington.

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20 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States and the State of
21 Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

22 By: 
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JOEY WIESER